He next prayed that the construction of the roads from Pattazhi to Talavur, from Kunnikode to Pattazhi and from Kunnikode to Anchal might be taken up as early as possible.

Lastly, the Member pointed out that, as there was at present only one dispensary for the whole taluk, it was not possible to serve the needs of the outlying *pakuthies*. To remedy this state of affairs, the Member suggested that a Medical Assistant might be attached to the Punalur Dispensary who should tour in the taluk with the necessary medicines so that medical aid might be brought within reach of the several poor inhabitants living in out-of-the way parts.

President's reply.—The last item of your representation will be considered.

About the opening of roads, the road from Pattazhi to Talavur will be taken up for execution this year. The others will be taken up later.

As regards the opening of a model agricultural farm at Punalur and of a model forest plantation, your suggestions are noted.

Regarding the registration of swampy areas in the names of the inhabitants of the Pattanapuram taluk, the general rule is that those areas should be auctioned by the Government. Your suggestion is that these areas should be registered in the names of Co-operative Societies. Your suggestion is noted.

VI. PUBLIC HEALTH, MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND MEDICAL RELIEF.

(1) Municipal Councils.—(*Concluded.*)

118. Needs of the Trivandrum Municipality.

Mr. C. S. Narayana Aiyar (Member, Municipal Council, Trivandrum) said that the policy pursued by the Government towards Municipalities was neither sound nor just and that the maxim that Municipalities should find their own resources was an exploded one. He pointed out that the bigger Municipalities in the other Indian States were given increased sums as years passed, but, in Travancore, the Government followed a contrary course and encouraged local bodies to embark on schemes of further and heavier taxation and even went so far as to criticise a Municipal body for not realising the maximum amount of revenue from the imposition of taxes. The object of the Government was to escape unpopularity and to transfer the odium of taxation to local bodies. He added that, if the Government were unwilling to help the Municipalities, the better thing would be to close them, instead of maintaining them in a half-starved and unhealthy condition. He made special reference to the fact that the attitude of the Government with regard to the Trivandrum Municipality was the least reasonable. He stated that Trivandrum, being the capital, naturally possessed several public offices and courts and people flocked to the town for all manner of business and Government received revenue in the shape of stamp fees, court fees, etc., but the Government did not concern themselves with the problem of housing, water supply and sanitation. He emphasised that the Government should make a substantial contribution to the Municipality to meet all such expenditure. It was necessary that the angle of vision should change, because, as matters stood, while a poor man's house was taxed, the Government claimed exemption from payment of tax in respect of the numerous buildings belonging to them. The license fees from all vehicles plying in the town and the stamp fees on petitions and copying sheets went to the general revenues, and the Member said that that was not an equitable allocation of funds.

He then spoke on the appointment of a non-official President for the Trivandrum Municipality. He pointed out that the Municipality was working under serious defects and that those defects were not due to the lack of interest on the part of the Councillors or the want of their capacity to manage the affairs of the Council. He stated that, while all the moffusil Councils were given non-official Presidents, he could not understand why the Government insisted on appointing, as President, a very small officer whose position in the premier Municipality was distinctly inferior to that of the several of the Members and added that the Council really smarted under such an arrangement.

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In speaking about the urgent necessity of widening some of the most useful and crowded roads, the Member said that the road from the College to Bhaktivilas was too narrow and that carriage and motor car accidents were not uncommon. It was crowded for most part of the day by students, male and female, of the two educational institutions. That was a subject of representation at previous sessions of the Assembly. It was also highly necessary that congestion in the Chalai portion of the town should be removed by opening parallel roads.

The Member next referred to the portion in the Dewan's Address in which it was stated that the Pharmacy was to be abolished on the ground that the Government should not compete with private enterprise in regard to the preparation and sale of Ayurvedic medicines. The opinion of the Member was that it was not a wise step. People generally appreciated the Ayurvedic *lehyas*, *kashayas*, etc. better and they were now getting them at the Pharmacy to their satisfaction. If the Pharmacy was abolished, the general public would be put to great inconvenience, as there were no decent private depôts at present for the sale of those medicines. If, however, the Pharmacy was going to be abolished, the Member requested that it might be transferred to the management of the Municipal Council, Trivandrum.

He added that the official Presidents were often unable to regulate discussions and to arrange matters to the satisfaction of the Council, and that sometimes the Presidents got terribly nervous when they attempted to speak at the meetings of the Council. Government had decided that the appointment of an executive officer should be a condition precedent to the appointment of the non-official President in the Trivandrum Municipality. When, however, the Municipal Council consented to such an arrangement, the Government shifted the ground and insisted upon the acceptance of an executive officer of the status of a Peishkar. Though the Council accepted even that stringent condition, still the Government were silent, from which he was inclined to suspect that the Government wished to put off the scheme indefinitely. It might be that, as His Highness the Maha Raja's residence was at Trivandrum, the Government desired to have an official President. If that were so, he assured the Government that the non-officials were more loyal to His Highness the Maha Raja than the officials and that nothing would receive greater attention at their hands than the effective sanitation of the Fort where the Palace is situated. He again pointed out that if the Dewan paid a visit to the Municipal Council, he would be satisfied that the official President was unable to maintain the prestige of his position during debates and that the President was loath to put into operation the resolutions of the Council. He submitted that, if the Government wanted an official President as a guide to the Councillors, the kind of officer now given to them, *i. e.*, one of a Division Assistant's status, could serve that object. If on the other hand Government wanted that the President should be an authority against the sense of the Councillors, they would refuse to have a master of that type. While non-official Presidents were given to other Municipalities, it could not be understood why the Municipal Regulation should be amended before giving an elected President to the premier Municipality. He then wound up his arguments by saying that, while he did not wish to make any personal appeal, he had to say that the Dewan who had always been in favour of giving more and more rights to the representatives of the people should be pleased to give to the Trivandrum Municipality a non-official President from the beginning of Medam, 1099.

The next subject dealt with by the Member was street lighting. He pointed out that the officers of Government sometimes went back on the definite directions of the Government and on the definite promises made to the Municipality. In spite of the very urgent letters sent to the Workshops Engineer to hand over the kerosene lights to the Municipality in 1097, it had been delayed on account of the inability of the P. W.D. to find new chimneys to replace the old ones. He submitted that the resolution of the Council to supply more lights to the town was not heeded, and that the existing lights were not in good order, as almost all the chimneys, etc., had to be replaced. Though the Council sent up another resolution urging the Government to hand over the street lights to the Municipality, nothing was done yet to meet the wishes of the Council.

In regard to the provision of cart-stands, the Member stated that a regulated system of hackney-fares was necessary. He pointed out that in Trivandrum the

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fares were higher than those in the towns in the Madras Presidency. Though a table fixing the fares was published in 1917, it was seldom adhered to. He requested that the Commissioner of Police be asked to revise the table of fares from station to station and added that, in all such stations, Municipal cart-stands should be built on sanitary principles.

He then referred to the absence of an adequate number of urinals and privies in the town. Without the provision of urinals, it was very hard to convict people for committing public nuisance. He thought that the Government should meet the initial expenditure for constructing the urinals and hand them over after construction to the Municipality for maintenance.

He next dealt with markets and slaughter houses. He said that the institutions of the above kind paid well, provided they were maintained well. The Trivandrum Municipality was paying a large sum as rent to owners of market sites. He suggested that suitable sites might be acquired by the Government and handed over to the Municipality for the purposes of establishing markets.

Finally, the Member stated that the Karamanai river was being used by almost the whole town and that the removal of sand from the bed of the river in and about the bridge where most people bathed, should be stopped. The Member added that even in Dewan Rama Aiyangar's time removal of sand was prohibited by a special order that sand should not be removed from an area 200 yards above or below the bridge. As sand was freely removed from the foot of the arches of the bridge, the foundation of the bridge itself was dug out in several places even below the basement. If that process were to go on, there would be danger to the bridge itself. What the Member wanted was that there should be absolute prohibition in regard to the removal of sand from anywhere near the bridge, which was the most popular resort of the public to bathe. He suggested that sand might be safely removed from either the Mavelikayam at the turn in the upper course of the river or from Vattakayam at the Ottatteruvil *kadavu* lower down. There were cart tracks from both these portions of the river to the road.

In speaking about the need for minimising the evils of drink and thus advancing the cause of temperance as a first step towards prohibition, the Member represented that the number of liquor shops in the town should be reduced considerably. He would even advocate the removal of all liquor shops from the municipal limits of the town. If that was not practicable, the other alternative he proposed was that liquor shops should be located within the town limits in consultation with the Municipal Council.

President's reply.—Mr. Narayana Aiyar, in regard to your representation regarding the location of liquor shops, let me tell you that it is one of the subjects which are being dealt with by the Excise Committee. The Committee is preparing its report, and when that report reaches the Government, your representation will receive due consideration.

As regards the removal of sand from the bed of the Karamanai river, in places close to the bridge, orders will issue to have the practice stopped at once. In *re*. the amendment of rules regulating hackney carriage stands, the matter will be looked into, and orders passed.

With reference to the transfer of the kerosene lights in the Town to the Municipal Council, the Dewan proposes to meet the Municipal Council and its President after his return and settle the question.

Regarding the appointment of a non-official President to your Council, you said that the Council had sent up a resolution to the Government, stating that the Council was agreeable to the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer exercising powers similar to those granted to the Commissioner of the Corporation of Madras under Madras Act IV of 1919. The appointment of a Chief Executive Officer

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involves an amendment of the Municipal Regulation. The papers have been accordingly sent to the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil to incorporate the necessary amendments in the draft amendment Bill to the Municipal Regulation, which is now being prepared by him. The work will be expedited.

As regards the widening of the road from the College junction to Bhaktivilas, and the other roads referred to by you, the matter will be looked into. Your representation as regards the supply of water to the town resolves itself into a question of finance and is noted for consideration.

The question of restricting the work of the Ayurveda Pharmacy at Trivandrum in the matter of preparing medicines for public sale is under correspondence. Your remarks on the subject will be duly considered when orders are passed.

As you yourself have said, the question of drainage is one closely connected with the water-supply scheme. Regarding the repairs to the existing drains, the Chief Engineer tells me that the work is being attended to once in every three or four years, and that the defects are being remedied. This year also there is a budget allotment of Rs. 5,000, which, I think, will be sufficient to meet immediate requirements.

Re. the provision of additional sites for latrines, when a resolution of the Municipal Council comes up before the Government on that subject, the matter will be considered.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS.—(*Continued.*)

119. Appointment of a Cabinet of three Ministers jointly elected by the members of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the Legislative Council to help in the Administration of Travancore.

Mr. G. Raman Menon M. A., B. L. (Member, Karunagapalli taluk) said that he had already pointed out in 1093 and 1097 the necessity of giving the representatives of the people real power in determining the policy and working of the administration of the State. His suggestion was to appoint the people's nominee as the Chief Minister, which he said was the practice in former days. He further emphasised that the highest executive officers of the State should be responsible not only to the Sovereign but also to the representatives of the people. He proceeded to mention the evils of the present one-man government and stated that the only remedy was the establishment of responsible government. His proposal was to hold a conference of the representatives of the chief communities and interests in the State in the shape of a joint session of the non-official members of the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, who should be asked to recommend three Ministers for helping in the Administration of the State, provision being made for guarding against communal jealousies by making one of the ministers a non-Hindu, another a non-caste Hindu and another a caste-Hindu or, in other words, a Christian, an Ezhava and a Nayar, those being the chief communities. The power of overruling such recommendations and appointing others should vest in His Highness the Maha Raja or the Paramount Power. His point was that the representatives of the people should under normal conditions be in a position to exercise a salutary influence in bringing Government servants of all grades to a proper sense of their position and responsibilities.

With regard to giving practical effect to the above suggestion the Member proposed that, when the non-official members of the two bodies met, they could elect a President or meet under the presidency of the Dewan ; candidates should be proposed for the leading Ministership and the successful candidate should in his turn name the gentlemen he would like to have as his colleagues ; and finally, the group or groups should be voted upon. When a vacancy arose in the Ministry, it should be filled on the recommendation of the leading Minister. When a vote of want of confidence was passed in any session of the representatives of the people, the Ministry should resign immediately. The first Ministry to be established should formulate a scheme of constitutional reform for the State. They should, either by themselves or by means of a Committee appointed by the Sovereign in consultation with the ministers formulate a scheme of constitutional reform and submit the same to the

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